

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 3

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A SENATE RESOLUTION urging the government of Turkey to cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox Christian Church, to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition, ecclesiastical succession, and the right to train clergy of all nationalities, and to respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Randolph

January 6, 2014, read first time and referred to Committee on Rules and Legislative Procedure.



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MADAM PRESIDENT:

I offer the following resolution and move its adoption:

1 A SENATE RESOLUTION urging the government of Turkey to
2 cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the
3 Orthodox Christian Church, to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch
4 appropriate international recognition, ecclesiastical succession, and the
5 right to train clergy of all nationalities, and to respect the property
6 rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

7 *Whereas, The Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in Istanbul, Turkey,*
8 *is the sacred See that presides in a spirit of brotherhood over a*
9 *communion of the self-governing churches of the Orthodox Christian*
10 *world;*

11 *Whereas, The See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who*
12 *is 270th in direct succession to St. Andrew the Apostle and holds titular*
13 *primacy as primus inter pares, meaning "first among equals," in the*
14 *community of Orthodox Christian churches worldwide;*

15 *Whereas, In 1994, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, along with*
16 *leaders of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, cosponsored the*
17 *Conference on Peace and Tolerance, bringing together Christian,*
18 *Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders for an interfaith dialogue to help*
19 *end the Balkan conflict and the ethnic conflict in the Caucasus region;*

20 *Whereas, In 1997, the Congress of the United States awarded*
21 *Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew a Congressional Gold Medal;*

22 *Whereas, Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on our*
23 *nation, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gathered a group of*
24 *international religious leaders to produce the first joint statement with*
25 *Muslim leaders condemning the attacks as "antireligious";*

26 *Whereas, In November 2005, the Ecumenical Patriarch, along with*



1 *Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored the Conference on*
 2 *Peace and Tolerance II to further promote peace and stability in*
 3 *southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and Central Asia via*
 4 *religious leaders' interfaith dialogue, understanding, and action;*

5 *Whereas, The Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly*
 6 *2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million members worldwide,*
 7 *with more than 2 million members in the United States;*

8 *Whereas, Since 1453, the continuing presence of the Ecumenical*
 9 *Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament to the religious*
 10 *coexistence of Christians and Muslims;*

11 *Whereas, This religious coexistence is in jeopardy because the*
 12 *government of Turkey refuses to recognize the rights and religious*
 13 *freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is considered a*
 14 *minority religion by the Turkish government;*

15 *Whereas, The Turkish government has limited eligibility to hold the*
 16 *office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only Turkish nationals;*

17 *Whereas, From the millions of Orthodox Christians living in Turkey*
 18 *at the turn of the 20th century, there are fewer than 3,000 of the*
 19 *Ecumenical Patriarch's flock in Turkey today, because of the continued*
 20 *policies of minority discrimination by the Turkish government;*

21 *Whereas, The Turkish government has reneged on its agreement to*
 22 *reopen the Theological School on the island of Halki, closed by the*
 23 *government in 1971, impeding training for Orthodox Christian clergy;*

24 *Whereas, The Turkish government has confiscated nearly 94 percent*
 25 *of the properties of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and has placed a 42*
 26 *percent tax, retroactive to 1999, on the Hospital of Baloukli and Home*
 27 *for the Elderly, a charity hospital run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate;*

28 *Whereas, The European Union, a group of nations with a common*
 29 *goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its people, began*
 30 *accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005;*

31 *Whereas, The European Union defined membership criteria for*
 32 *accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating*
 33 *candidate countries to achieve certain levels of reform, including*
 34 *stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, adherence to the rule*
 35 *of law, and respect for and protection of minorities and human rights;*

36 *Whereas, The Turkish government's current treatment of the*
 37 *Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership criteria*
 38 *of the European Union;*



1 *Whereas, Orthodox Christians in Indiana and throughout the United*
 2 *States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of the continued*
 3 *actions of the Turkish government; and*

4 *Whereas, In November 2006, the Archons of the Ecumenical*
 5 *Patriarchate of the order of St. Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen,*
 6 *each of whom has been honored with a Patriarchal title, or "offikion,"*
 7 *by the Ecumenical Patriarch for their outstanding service to the*
 8 *Orthodox Church, sent an American delegation to Turkey to meet with*
 9 *Turkish government officials and the United States Ambassador to the*
 10 *Republic of Turkey regarding the Turkish government's treatment of*
 11 *the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Therefore,*

12 *Be it resolved by the Senate*
 13 *of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

14 SECTION 1. That the Indiana Senate urges the Turkish government
 15 to uphold and safeguard religious and human rights without
 16 compromise; cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical
 17 Patriarchate; grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate appropriate
 18 international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train
 19 clergy of all nationalities; and respect the property rights and human
 20 rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

21 SECTION 2. That copies of this resolution be transmitted by the
 22 Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States, the United
 23 States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, and the Ambassador of
 24 the Republic of Turkey to the United States.

